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RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 4758
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 2532
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 000749

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/09/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [PK](#) [IN](#)
SUBJECT: HOLBROOKE-MULLEN VISIT TO INDIA: RECENT
"AVALANCHE" OF PAKISTANI INFILTRATIONS

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Peter Burleigh for
Reasons 1.4 (B and D)

¶1. (C) In each of the three important substantive meetings with Indian officials on April 8 (Foreign Secretary Menon, Ambassador S.K. Lambah, and National Security Advisor Narayanan), Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Holbrooke and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen were told that during the past six weeks, and continuing, there has been a dramatic increase in cross-border infiltrations. Narayanan gave the party a non-paper detailing such cross-border activities (paragraph 4). In Admiral Mullen's meeting with Chief of Navy Staff Mehta, he was told the same thing.

¶2. (C) Highlights of the Indian briefing:

- a) It is early for such infiltrations, which usually accelerate after snowbound passes open in late April/May.
- b) The numbers of infiltrators is higher and the infiltrating groups are larger than normal. (Narayanan called the phenomenon "an avalanche"). He asserted that the 2009 numbers through early April were already equal to all of ¶2008.
- c) The infiltrators are more heavily armed, better equipped, with both arms and communications equipment, and better trained.
- d) As a result of (c), the "kill ratio" (Indian troops to infiltrators) has gone down alarmingly. It is now 1.5 infiltrators to 1.0 Indian army/police killed.
- e. Given the numbers of infiltrators, it is "inconceivable" to the Indians that this escalation is not orchestrated by elements of the Government of Pakistan.
- f. In addition to the Indo-Pak/LOC cross-border activities, there has also been a substantial increase in infiltrations from neighboring Bangladesh and Nepal.

¶3. (C) Indian expectations of a major terrorist event have increased and they are concerned that groups may have been successful in crossing into India undetected. Narayanan and Menon speculated that the upcoming (April 16-May 15) Indian national elections may be the proximate cause of the expanded cross-border efforts. A substantial terrorist event would both impact on the conduct of the elections (and possibly their outcome) and put enormous new pressure on the Indian government to respond in some major way. Under such circumstances, it would be extraordinarily difficult for the Indian government to continue the restraint it has shown

since the November 2008 Mumbai attacks.

¶4. (C) Text of Non-paper & Infiltration in J&K * 20098 dated April 8, 2009:

¶1. Infiltration into J&K from Pakistan/PoK has been a regular feature, normally taking place in the Valley towards the end of April and early part of May, once the snow starts melting in the upper reaches. This year, however, infiltration has two disturbing aspects. One, infiltration has started in the month of March itself, which is far in advance of the normal infiltration timing and two, the number of infiltrants within the month of March itself has already exceeded the figure of infiltration for the whole of 2008.

¶2. Infiltration activities picked up in early March 2009 with terrorists reactivating their launching pads and locating terrorists there. The infiltration of terrorists so early in the year is in sharp contrast with what has been happening in the last few years. In 2008, the total infiltration in the whole year was 57. During the current year so far, 94 terrorists have been infiltrated into the Valley and 22 have been killed while infiltrating, 7 killed in avalanches and 1 arrested.

¶3. The groups, which have infiltrated this year so far, seem to be determined, well trained, well equipped and well clad, able to fight pitched battles with the Indian army at the places of their interdiction. Some of the confirmed cases of infiltration/interdiction are as follows:

i) A group of 25 armed terrorists infiltrated from Tanagdhara area in Kupwara district, and were interdicted in two different forests Drangyari and Hafruda. The encounter lasted for 7 days, in which 18 infiltrators were killed and 8 army personnel, including 1 Major lost their lives. As none of the killed militants could be identified, it lends credence to the belief that they were Pakistani nationals. The militants carried equipment and clothing like heavy woollens, white parka coats, windcheaters, rubber insulated snow boots and used pick axes (photographs enclosed) and could hence survive in the snow bound areas. The group was heavily armed as is evident from recoveries made by Army, which included 23 AK rifles, 1 pistol, 5 UBGL, 6 compass, 6 GPS sets, maps, 1 Thuraya set and large quantity of ammunition and grenades. The use of GPS, maps and compass indicates the high quality of military training being accorded to these terrorists. The terrorists were well prepared and carried butane gas cylinders to cut the fence, where required.

ii). The second infiltration took place in Gurez area of Bandipore district from March 26-28, comprising 20 militants. In the ensuing encounter lasting 3 days, 2 terrorists, suspected to be of the Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) were killed. The remaining terrorists taking advantage of the inclement weather were able to infiltrate successfully.

iii) The third group of infiltrating terrorists (LeT), suspected to be numbering 10, was interdicted in Zunreshi forest, Chowkibal, PS Trehgam, district Kupwara on April 2-4. In the ensuing encounter lasting 3 days, 2 terrorists and 1 army jawan were killed. Recoveries included AK rifles - 2, magazines - 7, hand grenade - 2, GPS - 1, Thuraya set - 1, compass - 1, map - 1, hand held radio set - 1 and Indian currency - Rs. 7000/-. In this case also, the identity of the slain terrorists could not be confirmed, hence the suspicion of their being Pakistani nationals.

iv). Another group comprising 10 members of Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, led by one Afzal of NWFP Pakistan infiltrated from Gurez area of Bandipore on March 23. One of the militants, Babar @ Naseem, s/o Amid-ur-Rehman, r/o Baramala Kund, Wardak, Afghanistan was apprehended on April 3 from Lalpora area of PS Kupwara. Recoveries included 1 AK rifle, 4 magazines and 3 hand grenades. His interrogation revealed that the group had undergone 30 days rigorous arms training at Mansehra camp of Harkat-ul-Mujahideen in NWFP. He

disclosed that they were provided white parka coats, snow boots, warm clothings etc. to enable them to negotiate snow on the LoC. He further disclosed that his group was to be followed by a group each of Hizbul Mujahideen, Lashkare-Tayyaba and Jaish-e-Mohammad.

v) Technical inputs confirm that a separate group of 13 armed terrorists had crossed over from across the LoC out of which 6 reached Badgam, while 7 were killed in an avalanche.

Terrorists poised for infiltration

¶4. A spurt in the activities of militant groups was noticed across the LoC from the beginning of March 2009. Groups were being brought to areas close to LoC for infiltration. The first input was received around March 6 about a group of LeT terrorists camping near Makhn in Haji Peer area of POK since March 5. Subsequent techint indicated presence of several groups along the LoC consisting of LeT, JeM, HM and Al-Badar terrorists. Most of the activity has been noticed in GOI, Makhn (Haji Peer), Kel and Dudhniyal all in POK.

¶5. 250 HM cadres are learnt to be in three separate lodging camps in POK, ready for induction at a short notice. In addition, about 50-100 cadres of HM are learnt to be located in different offices of the HM in Pakistan/POK. Intelligence inputs also indicate presence of 281 terrorists waiting for infiltration across the Valley.

¶6. Preceding the infiltration/interdiction of groups in March/April this year, there was heightened Thuraya activity across the LoC in POK. The intercepts clearly showed interaction between groups poised for infiltration and their launching commanders close to LoC and in Muzaffarabad. 26 Thuraya sets were found active in the month of January-March ¶2009. 348 calls were intercepted, of which 137 related to LeT, 46 to HM and 165 to unknown militants.

¶5. (U) Ambassador Holbrooke cleared this message.
BURLEIGH